



# Howard County Youth Task Force

Presentation to the  
Howard County Council  
July 13, 2009

# Presenters

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# Vision for Youth

All youth will be supported and empowered to create positive change and involvement in their community.

# Our Goal

- To determine the desirability and feasibility of a permanent Youth Commission in Howard County.
- The Task Force has successfully identified a strong public desire for a Youth Commission

# Survey of Local Agencies

- Identified key issues facing youth
- Identified methods used by the organizations
- Over 80% of responding agencies see a need for a Youth Commission

# Online Student Survey

- 132 students representing 12 high schools and 16 middle schools
- 94% agree that youth should be involved in problem solving
- 96% believe students could contribute and communicate ideas
- 58% would like to be involved

# Youth Summit Public Meeting

- Students were introduced to the idea of a Youth Commission
- Discussion in break-out sessions
- Responded to ideas on video
- Overall, in favor of Youth Commission with some concerns

# Interviews at YouTube

YouTube - Youth Summit 2009 Interviews - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHrxwEA8MIs

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## Youth Summit 2009 Interviews



0:24 / 9:40

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Interviews from the 2009 Voices for Change Youth Summit. Youth Commission comments

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# Bain Center Public Meeting

- Attendees briefed on the actions taken by the Youth Task Force
- Opportunity for questions and discussion
- Discussed roles for the Commission

# Results

- Howard County would greatly benefit from a Youth Commission
- Advising/decision-making
- Source for local government
- Channel for youth concerns
- Resource for teens
- Source of public education
- Promote positive image of Howard County youth

# “Six Keys to Effective Youth Councils”

- Determine council membership
- Ensure a sound infrastructure
- Provide a supportive work environment
- Build youth capacity
- Deepen youth motivation
- Negotiate opportunities for action

# Membership

- Diverse group of students
  - Geographically
  - Culturally
  - Academically
  - Economically
- Middle-school aged and above
- District map to determine membership
- Three youth members per district

# Recommendations

- Work with existing groups and agencies
- Informational clearinghouse
- Create master calendar
- Help other groups with recruitment
- Connect youth to opportunities

# Other Recommendations

- Peer communication
- Work with existing groups to find initial group
- Members accept responsibility to help recruit successors
- Adults should play an advisory role
- **One dedicated staff position**
- Continue momentum from Task Force in other youth efforts

# Thank you!

- More information is available on the county website and in the Final Report